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FROM EMBASSY CAPE TOWN

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, SF

SUBJECT: SENATOR ROTH'S TALK WITH VICE-STATE PRESIDENT  
- SCHLEBUSCH

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1. ~~(C - ENTIRE TEXT)~~

2. DURING CODEL ROTH'S CALL ON VICE-STATE PRESIDENT SCHLEBUSCH JANUARY 25, THE LATTER DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COUNCIL'S DECISION THIS WEEK TO RECONFIRM ITS DEMAND FOR A REFERENDUM ON PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL "DISPENSATION," RATHER THAN FOLLOWING THE COLORED LABOUR PARTY'S DECISION TO PROCEED STRAIGHT TO ELECTIONS. SCHLEBUSCH STATED HIS VIEW THAT IF THE INDIAN REFERENDUM DECIDED AGAINST PARTICIPATION, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROCEED FOR THE TIME BEING WITH A BICAMERAL PARLIAMENT OF WHITES AND SO-CALLED COLOREDS. IF THE INDIAN REFERENDUM WERE POSITIVE (EVEN IF MORE THAN FIFTY PERCENT ABSTENTIONS), THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY PUT OFF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION UNTIL THE ELECTIONS FOR THE INDIAN CHAMBER HAD BEEN HELD. SCHLEBUSCH POINTED OUT THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE OLD INDIAN COUNCIL ELECTIONS HAD ALWAYS BEEN LOW-- ABOUT TEN PERCENT -- AND THAT HE WOULD BE QUITE HAPPY IF 30 PERCENT PARTICIPATED IN THE REFERENDUM OR ELECTIONS. SCHLEBUSCH SHARED THE VIEW OF NATIONAL PARTY MP AND P. W. BOTHA CONFIDANTE JAN GROBLER (STATED TO AMBASSADOR THE PREVIOUS EVENING) THAT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT WELSH ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S PUBLIC PLEDGE THAT THE INDIANS AND COLOREDS HAVE THE RIGHT TO A REFERENDUM, IF THEY WISH ONE, EVEN THOUGH A REFERENDUM PRESENTS OPPONENTS WITH A MUCH BETTER CHANCE THAN ELECTIONS. SCHLEBUSCH SAW THE SAIC DECISION AS A SIGN THAT IT IS WORRIED ABOUT THE CHALLENGE FROM THE NEW "SOLIDARITY" PARTY FOUNDED BY PAT T. POOVALINGHAM AND J. N. REDDY.

3. PRESSED BY SENATOR ROTH ON THE OUTLOOK FOR THE INCLUSION OF BLACKS IN THE CONSTITUTION, SCHLEBUSCH REFERRED TO THE CABINET COMMITTEE FOR URBAN BLACKS BUT RULED OUT A FOURTH CHAMBER FOR THE FORESEEABLE

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FUTURE, ARGUING THAT THERE STILL WAS TOO MUCH OF A  
SOPHISTICATION GAP. EVENTUALLY, HE SAW THE EMERGENCE  
OF A CONFEDERATION, POSSIBLY INCLUDING BLACK CITY  
STATES.

4. ASKED WHAT HE INTENDED TO DO AFTER THE OFFICE OF  
VICE-STATE PRESIDENT DISAPPEARS WITH ENACTMENT OF THE  
NEW CONSTITUTION, SCHLEBUSCH REPLIED THAT HE WAS STILL  
WAITING TO SIT DOWN WITH THE PRIME MINISTER TO DISCUSS  
HIS FUTURE.

5. COMMENT: THE INDIAN COUNCIL'S DECISION TO GO FOR  
A REFERENDUM CLEARLY HAS CAST UNCERTAINTY OVER THE  
GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO PROCEED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE TRICAMERAL CONSTITUTION IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER.

NICKEL

END OF MESSAGE

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